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ABSTRACT

This proceedings contains abstracts of 21 presentations. Titles and presenters are: "Teaching and Learning in Multiage Classrooms" (Laura Blevins and others); "Leadership, School Reform and the Rural School Superintendent" (Mike Boone); "Teaching English as a Second Language from Theory to Practice" (Mingsheng Dai); "A Guide for Central Office Leaders for Implementing Systemic Continuous Improvement" (Kathy Dale, Alfred P. Wilson); "The Greening of a School District" (Kathy Dale, Alfred P. Wilson); "Character Construction Crew" (Bob Goodwin and others); "What the 'Arts in Education' Program Can Do for Your School: The Case of Wayne Wildcat" (Jim Hillesheim, Eric Hayashi, Wayne Wildcat); "After School Achievement" (Scott Hills); "Stakeholders' Evaluation of Rural/Small Schools" (Jerry G. Horn); "Preparing for the Changing Workplace: Helping Students Learn To Manage Their Careers" (Kenneth F. Hughey); "Communicating on the Web: Designing Pages for Visual Clarity" (Nancy Nelson Knupfer and others); "Harnessing the Internet: Applying Its Power to Rural Schools" (Nancy Nelson Knupfer); "Creating Cross-Platform Multimedia: Potentials and Pitfalls" (Judy E. Mahoney, William J. Rust); "The Increase of Anti-Social Behavior and Its Effect on Rural Classrooms" (Marjorie B. Pace, J. E. Potterfield); "Ethnic Groups, Diversity and Multicultural Understanding" (Richard Rangel); "Preparing Rural School Administrators" (Jan Reynolds); "Ethical Considerations of Internet Access" (Tweed W. Ross); "Alternate Education in Rural Communities" (Kerry Sachetta, David Rockers); "Developing Responsible Students: A Team Approach" (Frank Shaughnessy); "Population Change and Its Effect on Rural and Small Schools" (G. Kent Stewart); and "Process Skills in Secondary Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum" (Sally J. Yahnke). Presenters' institutional affiliations are included. (SV)

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Conference
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Changing Faces of Reform

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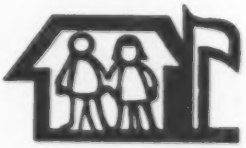

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Teaching and Learning in Multiage Classrooms

Presenters:
Laura Blevins
Jane Culver
Kristin Barbieri
Jill Hornung-Heeke
USD #443 — Dodge City
Dodge City, Kansas

Miller Elementary School in Dodge City, Kansas is beginning its third year of offering multiage classes for students. Children of different ages and grades are intentionally placed together, graded distinctions are minimized, and teaching and learning make use of knowledge inherent in the group. Participants will gain an understanding of how teaching and learning proceed in such a setting. Several teachers and the building principal will share their experiences.

Leadership, School Reform and the Rural School Superintendent

Presenter:
Mike Boone
Southwest Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas

Because rural school superintendents often operate in small isolated organizational settings, their leadership in mobilizing principals, teachers, parents and community members in the process of school improvement is essential. This frequently requires the superintendent to possess a high degree of interpersonal and political skill, including the ability to communicate, to plan, to monitor and evaluate and to build coalitions to support school improvement. This presentation will focus on what the research tells us about effective rural superintendents and what selected rural school superintendents actually do to make their school districts more effective. The purpose of the presentation is to assist those responsible for rural school reform to accomplish their tasks.

Teaching English as a Second Language from Theory to Practice

Presenter:
Mingsheng Dai
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Looking at the historical changes in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to adults, changes in the student body, changes in textbooks, and changes in methodology, the researcher takes these perspectives and examines three adult ESL programs in Manhattan, Kansas. The study found teaching styles, teaching attitudes, teaching activities, teaching materials, and pace in teaching contribute to the effectiveness and success of the ESL programs and students' rich and positive learning experience and their improvements explain the usefulness of the program.

Based on the findings, recommendations to the administrators and instructors of the ESL program for future improvement were given. In addition, three assessment questionnaires were also given to administrators, instructors, and students of the ESL program for the evaluation at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the program.

During the presentation, the presenter would show the audience what is available on the Internet and how we can take those into our classroom. The presenter would also demonstrate how to use HyperCard to create educational activities for ESL students and how students can be involved to make their own stacks.

A Guide for Central Office Leaders for Implementing Systemic Continuous Improvement

Presenters:
Kathy Dale
USD #210 — Hugoton
Hugoton, Kansas
Alfred P. Wilson
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

The purpose of this study was to develop a personal guide to assist small and rural school central office leaders in implementing a district program of systemic continuous improvement and to assist them in developing the leadership required to implement such a program. This guide instructed central office leaders in the philosophy of KAIZEN and the commitment KAIZEN requires. This guide focused on KAIZEN as a process for district improvement that is unique to each school district. The handbook became a personal guide into the journey of KAIZEN. Through a research and development process (Borg and Gall, 1996), a product was developed to aid small and rural school central office leaders in becoming a continuous improvement district.

The Greening of a School District

Presenters:
Kathy Dale
USD #210 — Hugoton
Hugoton, Kansas
Alfred P. Wilson
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

The objective of this interactive presentation is to provide a practical guide for small and rural school leaders wanting to create an "evergreen" school district based on continuous improvement system-wide.

Many small and rural school district leaders wear an extraordinary number of leadership hats and find themselves with little time to plan and implement systemic continuous improvement. However, administrators that care about the direction of their districts know that for districts to successfully survive as dynamic organizations into the next century, school districts must undergo profound systemic change.

The ever "greening" process of continuous improvement does not stop with the curriculum program or certified staff development or student achievement. Continuous improvement must touch every aspect of the organization, every department and every staff member. This requires the art of looking at the processes of schools and continually improving those processes daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, and continuously.

No one kind of school district exists for every child, either. What works for one community's school district is not a cookie cutter pattern for another school district. This presentation is not a cookbook or "one right answer," but a guide and moral support tool for central office leaders to create their own genetic blueprint to becoming a green and continuously improving school district.

This presentation describes continuous improvement in education as a tree that gradually roots deeper and deeper into continually improving the system of educating students. A key to developing a strong root system is developing the district leaders who will lead the district through the growing process.

Like any change process, the transition period of continuous improvement is difficult and laden with snares--dragons in the mist of the transition that derail and hinder growth and change. How leaders handle transitional difficulties will determine the success or failure of the process. This guide also teaches district leaders how to recognize those invisible dragons and lead the district through the mist and chaos of transitioning into continuous improvement.

Character Construction Crew

Presenters:
Bob Goodwin
Pam Maine
Cheryl Spare
Robin Earles
USD #306 — Southeast of Saline
Gypsum, Kansas

"The Character Construction Crew," silhouetted figures of men and women in hard hats, can be found on posters, table-tents, and in the Southeast of Saline District Newsletter. This crew helps parents and staff tell the story about character development to the students in our school district.

This program was created two years ago by interested parents and the superintendent of schools to help emphasize to students that character counts. With permission from the district school board the creators of this program began to get the message out about what kinds of behavior exhibits the development of character among our students.

Each month a virtuous behavior is spotlighted through various means. Posters are put up around school, table-tents are created that go on the dining tables in the cafeteria and a short letter to parents is sent in the district newsletter. Virtues such as honesty, caring, dependability and perseverance are discussed and examples of these virtues are shared with the students.

We think it has made our elementary and secondary schools better and has helped our students accentuate the positive things in character development that can contribute to a happy and productive style of living. We would like to share information about our program with others.

What the "Arts in Education" Program Can Do for Your School: The Case of Wayne Wildcat

Presenters:
Jim Hillesheim
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas
Eric Hayashi
Kansas Arts Commission
Wayne Wildcat, Artist

The Hows, Whys, and Wherefores of the "Arts in Education" program of the Kansas Arts Commission will be examined from three different perspectives: that of field research based initially on a Federal grant, "Arts Experiences for Rural Administrators," and on recent scholarship (Jim Hillesheim); that as a significant source of funding, the Kansas Arts Commission, now under the leadership of a new Executive Director (Eric Hayashi); and that of veteran artist Wayne Wildcat, known especially for his large historical paintings, who is currently working in Kansas schools with support from the "Arts in Education" program.

After School Achievement

Presenter:
Scott Hills
USD 286 — Chautauqua Co. Community
Sedan, Kansas

USD 286 was concerned about the number of students either failing, taking zero's, or not completing classwork. We spent the first semester of the 1996-97 school year looking at alternatives to help our students be successful.

At the beginning of the second semester, we implemented our **After School Study Hall** program, grades 6-12. Here is the procedure:

1. Students can be referred by a teacher, parent, or self.
2. After School Study Hall is run from 3:05 until 4:00 Monday through Thursday.
3. Staff members are available to help students with individual needs or can work with a group.
4. Parents are notified by letter if their child has been referred.
5. Our district provides transportation home for bus students at 4:00 p.m.

Our objective was to make this a positive program for the students, teachers, and parents. Grades from the second nine weeks to the third nine weeks for the middle school are as follows: A's up by 63, B's up by 58, C's dropped by 2, D's dropped by 55 and F's dropped by 67.

This presentation will be made with the use of an overhead projector. I plan on presenting two handouts. One will include the goals and procedures for our program, the other our most recent data including final grades from 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes. My address will also be available for anyone needing more information on our program.

Stakeholders' Evaluation of Rural/Small Schools

Presenter:
Jerry G. Horn
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

The purpose of this presentation is to challenge the traditional way of viewing the "educational establishment's" role in evaluation of schools and to offer a recommendation that moves critical responsibilities to the community. This session will be presented using discussion topics, supporting examples from practice, recommendations for action, and question and audience participation during a planned question and answer session.

School evaluations provide a means to determine the merit and worth of what we often describe as society's single largest investment in financial resources and the vehicle for shaping our future. Yet, we seldom take the evaluation of schools as a serious endeavor and of much value.

For an evaluation to be of value, it must be useful and believable. Characteristically, most rural communities laud the merits of their schools and have traditionally been supportive in a variety of ways. Yet, the basis for this praise is at best weak in many cases and probably nonexistent in some. As to believability, perceived rural and small school effectiveness is often "explained away" by the public, and legislatures often conclude that the effectiveness of a rural/small school is offset by fiscal inefficiency.

Probably more damaging is the fact that most school evaluations themselves are of questionable quality, restricted to only a part of what schools are about, and the results are selectively made available to the community. Further, most school evaluations are designed and conducted by employees of the school and approved by the school board, which in any reasonable sense should be considered a part of the school establishment. Serious flaws in evaluations of this type include lack of attention to potential conflicts of interests and/or bias control.

I propose that rural and small schools are in a unique position to lead the way in authorizing and supporting a school evaluation in which community stakeholders guide its development, direct its conduct, and purposely open its findings to parents and other community members. More specifically, I propose that the schools, acting on their own authority, authorize the community to evaluate its schools, including its instruction, curriculum, student support services, administration, governance (school boards), fiscal affairs, and other components deemed essential in determining the merit and worth of its schools and the educational opportunities afforded its children, youth, and appropriate adults. Through such an effort, those who are "a part of the system," such as teachers, administrators, students, other school personnel, and school board members are informants for the evaluation. However the conduct of the evaluation would be the responsibility of the community with competence assistance and advice as required.

The session is concluded with a step-wise diagram and list of tasks/steps that will lead toward a stakeholder-based school evaluation procedure.

Preparing for the Changing Workplace
Helping Students Learn to Manage Their Careers

Presenter:
Kenneth F. Hughey
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Career development has become increasingly important for our students. The school-to-work movement emphasizes the importance of preparation for work and plays an important role in educational reform. Preparing students to make the transition from school to work or from school to additional education is an essential task for schools. Given the changes that are occurring in the workplace and the level of competition for jobs, it is essential that students be provided assistance with their career and educational planning and decision making. It is important that students be aware of and understand the world of work and what it takes to be successful. In addition, students need to be aware that changes will continue and knowing how to deal effectively with change will be important for them as they strive to manage their career.

In addition, it is important that students consider the range of postsecondary educational options available to them. This will help students and their parents realize there are options in addition to colleges/universities. As students and parents are involved in the career and educational planning process, some statistics to keep in mind are the following: about one-half of those who begin a baccalaureate program follow it through to completion, and between 1994 and 2005 about one-fourth of the jobs will require a bachelor's degree. As a result, providing effective career and educational planning for all students including those Dale Parnell called "the neglected majority" is essential.

Effective career planning along with a solid academic preparation provides a foundation which will facilitate educational and occupational success and opportunity for all students. This certainly is consistent with and complements educational reform efforts.

The topics to be covered by this session include:

*the changing workplace and the skills needed for the changing workplace;

*helping students understand the world of work and educational options; and

*implications of the changing workplace for schools and educators.

Communicating on the Web
Designing Pages for Visual Clarity

Presenters:
Nancy Nelson Knupfer
Barbara I. Clark
Judy Mahoney
Kevin Kramer
Nabel Al-Ani
Hamed Ghazali
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Objectives:

Examine the potential of the WWW for rural education. Discuss the shortcomings of the commonly available material for learning how to create web pages. Present guidelines for designing visually aesthetic and functional web pages that communicate clearly.

Content:

This presentation examines some of the software and books that provide instruction about creating Web pages. In addition, it presents a sample of web pages created by faculty and students for class instruction or projects. The analysis of the guidelines and products in this area lead to suggestions about creating Web pages from the perspective of visual literacy and clear communication.

Methods:

Present information about the potential of the WWW for teaching and learning, and elaborate on its potential for rural schools. Explain the role of clear

visual communication on the Web. Show of sample web pages of varying quality that illustrate some guidelines.

Recent developments in on-line communications have led to the ability to create home pages and offer course delivery on the World Wide Web. Many instructors and students are creating web pages, yet they have little guidance concerning the visual design of such pages. A myriad of technical manuals provide information about how to create web pages, but they don't specifically address the necessary design elements that will help make the page communicate clearly and appear aesthetically pleasing.

One instructor said, "I really had problems trying to put my course on-line.....with technicians, what to add in terms of graphics. I never did [add graphics] because I couldn't come up with anything appropriate...just used text and links to other web sites. There is a great need for visual literacy..... When I am out on the web I see a button and when I click, often it is not an image (or my definition of an image) it is just a line or a colored 'rock" or maybe it has really no significance."

The "business of creating web sites" is rampant with technical people who know how to put the page on-line, but have little knowledge about visual literacy. Many services offer web page construction and many books or downloaded material can offer access with little thought to the overall image of the page. Usually the focus is about the HTML language, not the page design.

The subject of images is critical. Many people have access to the WWW, but they have slow modems or limited machine capacity, so large images load very slowly. Currently, only three percent of all schools in the U.S. have Internet hookups and many of those cannot handle complex graphic images.

Teachers and students who have training in art, visual design, visual messaging, or instructional design are rare. Usually they want to copy images from the Web and even the images they want to copy don't seem to have a sense of being connected to the whole.

An examination of a variety of Web page guide books reveals that they are fairly thorough at providing guidance about the mechanics of creating a Web page, but so far information about the overall visual presentation seems to be lacking, whether it be images or text presentation.

Harnessing the Internet
Applying Its Power to Rural Schools

Presenter:
Nancy Nelson Knupfer
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Rural Schools have great potential to overcome some of the effects of distance, isolation, and limited resources by accessing the vast amount of information offered via the internet. While many educators believe that to be true, they remain unsure about the details of such potential. The objective of this session is to provide information about ways to use the internet in K-12 rural schools in a way that enhances the curriculum through meaningful, relevant application.

Teachers and students in rural areas do not all have access to the internet and in fact, it remains out of reach for some schools due to budget limitations or technical problems that are difficult to resolve immediately. However, teachers who are armed with information about why they want an internet connection stand a better chance of making that access a reality. Further, they can prepare meaningful use of the technology if they know about some of its vast potential.

This session will present some basic information about the types of communication and information available through the internet. Then it will provide detailed information about ways to implement the internet in the most relevant and meaningful way within the schools. Some guidance will be offered for taking common sense precautions when exposing students to the internet. Finally, a set of information that includes addresses for some great internet material will be

provided to participants. The style of presentation will be a lecture with visual support and audience handouts to take home.

Creating Cross-Platform Multimedia
Potentials and Pitfalls

Presenters:
Judy E. Mahoney
William J. Rust
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Creating multimedia on one platform (Macintosh or Windows) and running it on another greatly increases the usability of learning materials. With the distribution of computer types being nearly equal, the need to cross the platform barrier is increasingly evident. Many school districts have both Macintosh and PC computers. Valuable instructional materials created on either may be limited to use on only that platform. With a number of new multimedia authoring software packages, it is not only possible but reasonably simple to create materials that will run on both platforms. This article lists some of the available products and how they fit into the authoring software universe. It also describes some of the pitfalls in cross-platform development.

The Increase of Anti-Social Behavior and Its Effect on Rural Classrooms

Presenters:
Marjorie B. Pace
J. E. Potterfield
Francis Marion University
Florence, South Carolina

Objective: Participants will consider patterns of youth gang development and behaviors, the effects of youth gangs in the rural school, and possible solutions to this volatile interaction.

Summary of the Contents:

In 1985 there were an estimated 400 gangs and 45,000 gang members in Los Angeles County. By 1991, there were about 800 gangs with 90,000 members. This is no longer just a big city problem. Suburban, small town, and rural schools are now threatened (Harper, 1989). Unfortunately school officials are slow to recognize the problem (Clabaugh & Rozycki, 1990). Only after instruction is disrupted is attention directed to this issue.

Teachers and administrators need to identify gang behaviors early and develop a plan to offset these behaviors. Cantrell and Cantrell (1993) offer a five step program designed to counteract gangs' detrimental and dangerous influences.

1. Be knowledgeable. Educators should become familiar with the trappings and rituals of gang life.
2. Join forces with community leaders, police, and parents. No one social institution can solve a social problem of this size. The school system

must reach out to and act cooperatively with other groups affected by gangs.

3. Implement special curricula in all grades. Anti-gang curricula can be an effective device to lessen the impact of gangs on the lives of children and the schools they attend.
4. Treat each student with respect. Teachers and administrators should learn how to interact individually with gang members, showing respect than fear or hostility.
5. Make the school a safe haven. Safety measures such as dress codes, confiscating beepers, and reporting weapon offenses to the police are necessary.

Schools must be proactive and formulate functional plans to neutralize both the emergence and the negative impact of youth gangs. Faculty and staff must be provided with knowledge and skills to enable them to deal efficiently and effectively with this population.

Format of Presentation:

Through a review of the literature, background information and suggested resolutions will be introduced. In a guided brainstorming session, participants will be encouraged to contribute additional remedies for the challenging problem of the interaction of youth gangs and the school.

Ethnic Groups, Diversity and Multicultural Understanding

Presenter:
Richard Rangel
Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory
Aurora, Colorado

A forty minute video will be presented which is the history of intolerance in America for different ethnic groups — The Shadow of Hate. The video shows three centuries of American history to examine the historical events of ordinary people and their struggles for equal rights. The video will infuse the history and struggles of Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans but not limited only to these groups of Americans.

The hope is that the presentation will create a guiding force for school districts and schools to create or start the dialogue for creating the development and implementation of a locally developed multicultural education program. How can the program be infused into the curriculum and instruction with the knowledge and skills necessary for students and staff to challenge and eliminate acts of racism, prejudice, bigotry, discrimination and stereotyping.

How the locally developed program will support staff as they examine their own cultural history and heritage and the cultural history and heritage of others. Examine and challenge their own attitudes and behaviors about individuals and institutional racism, and learn to demonstrate respect for different cultures and advocate for strength in diversity.

The presentation will cover different types of cultural perceptions, different levels of multicultural understanding, ways individuals and organizations view cultural diversity.

Preparing Rural School Administrators

Presenter:
Jan Reynolds
Central Missouri State University
Warrensburg, Missouri

Objectives:

1. Discuss the reform movement in establishing a more reality based internship.
2. Share the results of a survey involving superintendents of 117 West Central Missouri school districts conducted in January 1996 seeking input from school practitioners in designing an improved mentor/ internship experience for our education administration interns.
3. Discuss the unique needs of rural districts and how those needs might be met by the stakeholders in preparing rural principals.
4. Discuss the graduate internship model at Central Missouri State University.

Content:

The internship for the aspiring school leader has been scrutinized in an attempt to better prepare school administrators. Many ideas, models and suggestions have been proposed. The National Policy Board defined the internship as a variety of substantial experiences in diverse settings planned and supervised cooperatively by university and school district personnel and conducted in schools and school districts. In an effort to make the internship as reality based as possible, one of the recurring suggestions is to develop a full-time internship experience. Mark Anderson (January, 1992) recommends that universities, school districts, and

administrator associations work cooperatively to provide practical training opportunities for aspiring school principals. He also states that a full-time internship should be a critical part of the training for prospective school administrators.

Due to the ratification of the new standards put forth by the National Policy Board for the Preparation of educational leaders by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, many departments of education administration are now undergoing major changes in their preparation programs, including the internship. These changes may very well have serious ramifications for aspiring principals of rural schools and the schools in which they serve.

Method of Presentation:

Critical questions will be shown on the overhead to be discussed. The presenter will introduce the questions and share some of the responses derived from the survey. Those in attendance will be invited to respond to how they have or are intending to meet the needs being discussed. The presenter will focus on the unique needs of the rural schools and share the results of a study in which 117 superintendents in the Central Missouri were surveyed. The superintendents were asked to recommend means of improving the principal internship experience. Responses from rural school administrators will be separated and reported. Those responses will be contrasted with other sized schools and ideas and discussion will be elicited on model internship programs for rural districts.

Ethical Considerations of Internet Access

Presenter:
Tweed W. Ross
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Modern electronic computer communication, as exemplified by Internet access for schools, has brought to rural and urban students unprecedented opportunities for research and discovery learning. At the same time Internet access has flung open electronic doors to previously protected school environments. Opportunities to misuse the Internet abound. Schools, if they are to effectively use the learning potential of this vast new resource, must also learn how to control it without limiting student opportunities for meaningful exploration. This session will examine issues of Internet access including acceptable use policies, electronic mail, freedom of speech, and school supervision.

Alternate Education in Rural Communities

Presenters:
Kerry Sachetta
David Rockers
USD #499 — Galena
Galena, Kansas

All communities must accept the fact that no matter how large or small, there are many students who cannot function in traditional settings. Alternative junior high and high school programs can help keep at-risk teenagers in school, and focus on their immediate and long term needs in ways that are non-threatening, nurturing, and highly structured. This presentation will help participants identify community needs, develop a plan of action, choose a model of instruction, reduce costs, develop a vocational structure, and plan for growth.

A successful "alternative program" can not only help teenagers find a way to get a high school education, but also visualize and realize success in the work force before graduation. Bridging the gap between education and business can help the transition between high school failure and an employable high school graduate. Alternative schools can lead the way in providing large communities in structuring "A School within a School" concept.

Developing Responsible Students: A Team Approach

Presenter:
Frank Shaughnessy
Trumbull Consolidated School
Trumbull, Nebraska

Since 1993, Trumbull Consolidated School staff has been committed to developing respectful, responsible students by working together in teams for better school-wide and classroom management. Administrators, support staff, teachers, and classified staff have all contributed to the model. Our continuing goal is to provide quality education to all students in a caring, invitational atmosphere.

Procedures and practices have been developed which provide educational opportunities for all students, from gifted to at-risk, to practice appropriate social skills in a caring, inclusionary setting. A variety of resources have been used to develop this plan, including: Vern Jones research on teaching at-risk students, ASCD Discipline With Dignity, the Boys Town Social Skills model, conflict resolution techniques from various sources, and Invitational School research.

This presentation will begin with a brief history of why and how the plan came about. Discussion of successful practices developed by Trumbull School using student teams led by teacher mentors and Student Council members will follow. The audience will be shown examples of how these teams can develop mediation skills, social skills, and appreciation of diversity among students. The audience will be given the opportunity to discuss key elements necessary to make student teams successful. As time permits, the audience will practice activities which have proven effective in developing student teamwork. A survey will also be provided which

can be taken back to local schools and used as an inventory of effectiveness in working with at-risk and regular students in the classroom.

This presentation is intended for administrators, middle and high school teachers, special educators, and counselors.

Population Change and Its Effect On Rural and Small Schools

Presenter:
G. Kent Stewart
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

The Data

A Kansas map showing the 105 counties in the state was divided into six geographic regions — NW, SW, NC, SC, NE and SE. County population data were then studied within each of the geographic areas. Additionally, the number of school districts within each county was ascertained and those with enrollments over 500 were noted. The 500 figure was purely a random choice. Findings are summarized in the statements that follow:

I. Northwest Kansas — 12 counties
   A. Population in all 12 counties is expected to decline by the year 2000.
   B. Of 24 school districts, seven enrolled more than 500 students — 29%.

II. Southwest Kansas — 19 counties
   A. By the year 2000, population is expected to increase in eight counties. These include the Dodge City, Liberal, and Garden City areas. Increases are due to the beef, pork, and dairy industries.
   B. Of the 37 school districts, 13 enroll more than 500 students — 35%.

III. North Central Kansas — 14 counties
   A. Only Ellsworth County is expected to remain steady or increase in population by the year 2000.
   B. Of the 33 school districts, 16 enrolled over 500 students — 48%.

IV. South Central Kansas — 17 counties

A. By the year 2000, population is expected to increase in four counties — all along the I-135 /35 corridor from McPherson through Wichita to the Oklahoma border.

B. Of the 62 school districts, 32 have more than 500 students — 52%.

V. Northeast Kansas — 23 counties

A. By the year 2000, population is expected to increase in 12 counties. These include the I-70 corridor from Junction City to the Missouri border, except Wabaunsee County. The greater Lawrence area and the Miami County south of Johnson County along State Highway 69.

B. Of the 83 school districts, 61 enroll more than 500 students — 73%.

VI. Southeast Kansas — 20 counties

A. Two of the counties are expected to increase in population between now and the year 2000. These are Butler and Cowley counties — both influenced by Wichita, the I-35 corridor and such cities as Augusta, El Dorado, Winfield, and Arkansas City.

B. Of the 66 school districts, 47 enroll over 500 students — 71%.

Implications

The data tend to imply need to study enrollment trends in the counties with static population or projected population decline. There are a few more school districts with more than 500 students than there are with fewer than 500 students. Further, the trend seems to be toward larger enrollment districts because many are in large population counties.

Such trends tend to support critics of small and rural schools. Especially vulnerable are schools in districts that are in close proximity to other districts. Yet, school district leaders prefer that their districts remain small by choice rather than by

reason of sparcity. This desire could become a target of controversy. The legislature is tending toward fiscal conservatism and may also become increasingly representative of larger population areas. It therefore becomes even more important for leaders in small rural school districts to continue studying options to ensure that the future of such districts remains bright.

Process Skills in Secondary Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum

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Today's society is changing rapidly and it is becoming less possible to operate our lives effectively using old paradigms. The adolescents of today will be living in a global society that will require its citizens to think constructively, make sound decisions, solve problems, access information and take responsibility for their own lives. It is essential that the educational programs be designed to respond to the diverse needs and characteristics of today's students. The secondary family and consumer sciences curriculum provides the opportunity for teachers to meet the needs of students and prepare them to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The curriculum has been developed to address pertinent issues in school reform and focuses on outcomes identified in the Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation.

The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate the relationship between process skills, basic skills and the major content areas in family and consumer sciences. The intent of the curriculum is to present content with a new focus that prepares students for the challenges they face today and in the future. The integration of process skills within the context of family and consumer sciences maximizes the opportunities for authentic learning experiences for students.